BRAVURA
DANIEL BRERETON
THE NOCTURNALS
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THE NOCTURNALS
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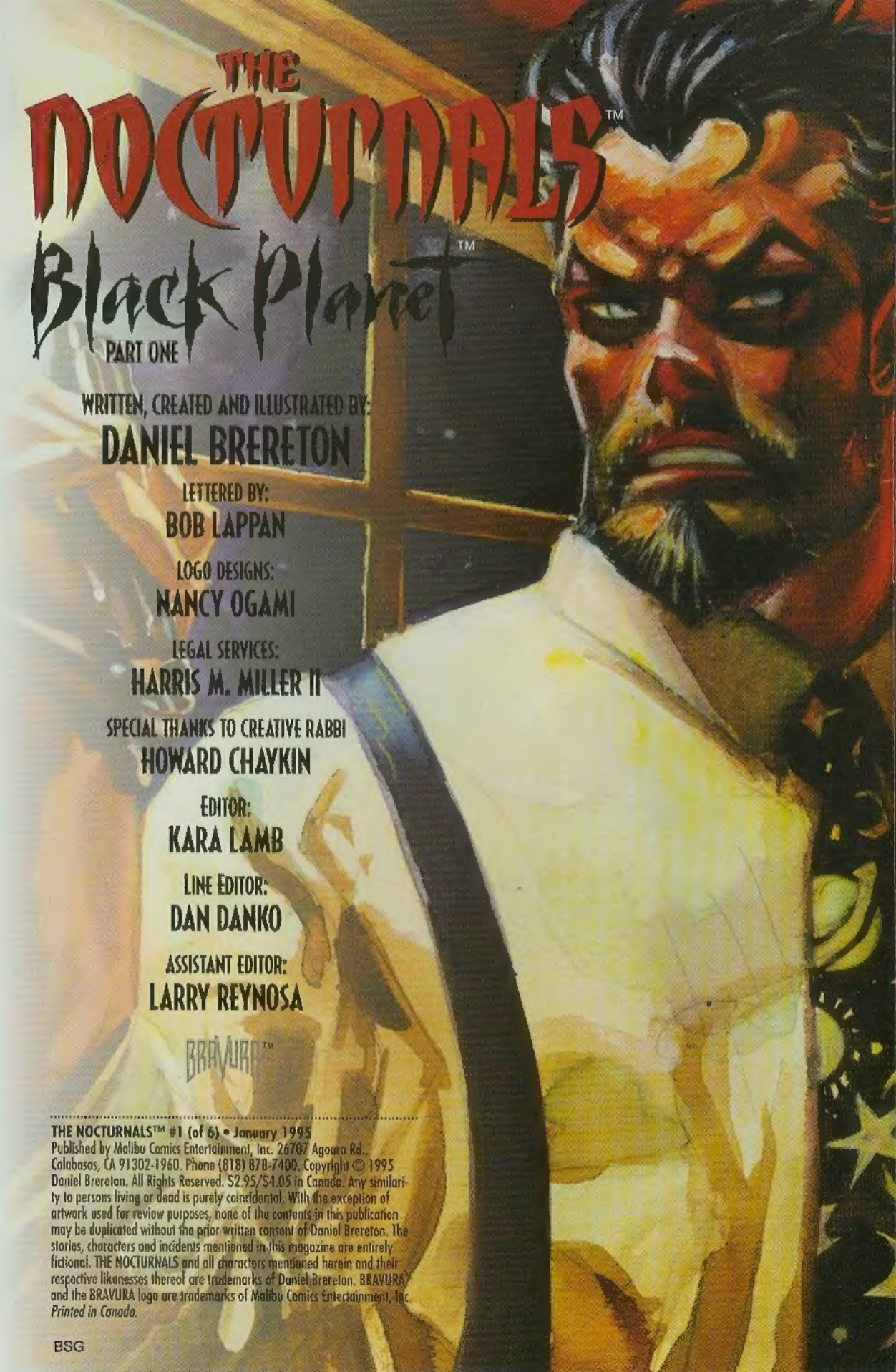

THE NOCTURNALS™

Black Planet™

PART ONE

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BRAVURA™

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BSG

THE NARN K GENETIC RESEARCH FACILITY. NORTH CALIFORNIA.
NARN K laboratories
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
THE MONSTER SHOP.
FRANKENSTEIN'S ASSEMBLY LINE, FABRICATED ARMIES READY FOR MARKET.
SOME OF THEM FORGED OF PLASTICS AND SYNTHESIZED FLESH... SPECIALIZED GOLEMS READY FOR A PROGRAMMED LIFE OF SERVICE TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.
AND OTHERS... CREATURES MORE SPIRITED, BORN OF ANIMAL AND HUMAN TISSUES...
...FUSED AND CULTIVATED HYBRIDS; WILD AND UNTESTED. CAST IN A WORLD THAT HAS NO PLACE FOR THEM IN THE ORDER OF THINGS.
NIGHTCRAWLERS! EARTHWORMS!
STUCK WITH AN IDIOT'S MAP, A CRAYON-SCRIBBLED MESS!
NEVER TRUST A RODENT, NEVER!
LOVELY REPTILE... ARE YOU LOST?
A CREATURE LIKE ME. THE DRAGON BOY.

THAT WAS FAST. THEY MUST HAVE GOTTEN TO CHATTER. IT'S WHAT I GET FOR CONSORTING WITH MAMMALS.
FOOLISH STRAY... DID YOU THINK WE WOULDN'T LOOK FOR YOU UNDERGROUND THIS TIME, KOMODO?
THE WALLS ARE DRESSED WITH RAZORWIRE.
AND YOU CERTAINLY CAN'T FLY OVER THEM LIKE BEFORE, HMM?
YOU REMEMBER, DON'T YOU, LIZARDY
SHUT UP.
DON'T MOVE NOW, DRAGON BOY. I MIGHT HAVE TO WING YOU AGAIN.
YOU WON'T. YOU NEED ME. I'M WORTH SOMETHING TO YOU.
WELL, SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR PRECIOUS THING, JERK. YOU CAN CHOKE ON THOSE DAMNED WINGS. THEY ITCHED LIKE HELL!
LET ME SCRATCH YOU.
BLAM
SECURITY

UNNNGH!
I SUPPOSE THAT WAS ONLY A WARNING.
WOULD YOU LIKE ANOTHER?
BIND HIM.
HSSSSS
GET AWAY FROM ME!
CAREFUL NOW, ROBERT...
HE'S A PUSSYCAT. THESE MIXBLOODS ARE ALL THE SAME, MR. FANE...
ALL HISS AND STEAM...
KH
SHRRE
SEK
I DID TELL HIM TO BE CAREFUL.
THESE TORPEDO MODELS ALWAYS WERE A BIT THICK.
MAYBE I DIDN'T MAKE MYSELF CLEAR...

KLUDD
GET AWAY FROM ME!
THIS MAP WAS SUPPOSED TO HELP ME. NOW I SEE IT WAS ONLY MEANT TO SLOW ME DOWN.
UNLIKE THESE MANUFACTURED JUNKHEAPS CHASING ME, I THOUGHT I COULD TRUST A FELLOW HYBRID. AFTER ALL, I'M NOT THE FIRST TO MAKE THE ATTEMPT. THE RACCOON MADE IT.
THE RACCOON CHEATED DEATH. CHATTER SAID HE'S LIVING OUT THERE NOW.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
FREE. IMAGINE THAT.
HAVING A LIFE. NO MORE TURNKEYS. NO WALLS.
IF I LIVE LONG ENOUGH, MAYBE I'LL FIND OUT FOR MYSELF.

TIME TO START RUNNING ON INSTINCT AGAIN... QUIT BEING ENSNARED BY REASON. SHOULD HAVE LEARNED BETTER AFTER LAST TIME.
I REMEMBER AFTER THEY TAUGHT ME TO READ, I DOVE INTO THIS ONE BOOK.
IT COST ME MY WINGS.
THERE WERE THESE CREATURES IN IT THAT SERVED THIS WICKED WITCH, THESE WINGED MONKEYS.
I DECIDED THEN THAT I WASN'T GOING TO BE ANY SLAVE. UNLIKE THE SYNTHETICS, NONE OF US HYBRIDS CAN BE BRAIN-TICKLED INTO DOING WHAT WE DON'T WANT TO.
THE WITCH HAD THIS GOLDEN CAP THAT CONTROLLED THEM AND THERE WAS NOTHING THEY COULD DO ABOUT IT. THEY WERE TRAPPED.
SO I FLEW AWAY.
BROWN
A DOG, RIGHT? I'VE SEEN PICTURES.
A LITTLE SMALL... BUT IT'D MAKE A DECENT MEAL.
DAMN. CUT OFF.
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT? NO SYNTH REEKS THAT BAD.

HE'S DEAD. I CAN SMELL THAT.
DEAD A LONG TIME SOMEBODY SHOULD TELL HIM.
DOWN HERE, LANTERN JAW!
I'M A HANDBAG FOR SURE...
THERE!
CLICK
KA-CLICKT
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, YOU WALKING PILE OF...
BLAMM
BLAM
CHARK
CHARK

SPLUCH
SPLETCH
UGH
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT!
A CORPSE JUST SAVED MY LIFE.

BROWF!
CHATTER SAID THE RACCOON WAS VISITED BY DEATH.
DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT ANY DOGS, LADDERS...
...OR A TALL, POINTY HAT...
GO ON, FLY AWAY, KOMODO
IT'S A SHAME YOUR BENEFACTOR, THE GOOD DOCTOR, WON'T BE THERE TO GREET YOU.
HE'LL BE OUR PRISONER SOON.
HIS SECRETS WILL BELONG TO THE K...
...AND AFTER THE GULLS FINISH PICKING HORROR'S BRAIN, MY GOLDFISH WILL SWIM THROUGH HIS POLISHED SKULL
FLY AWAY HOME, NOCTURNALS.
...BE SEEING YOU...

LATER THAT EVENING AT THE ZAMPA INC OFFICES PERIL CITY
MEETING IN PROGRESS
CATCH!
LUCILLE HERE JUST BROUGHT ME ANOTHER PISTOL FOR MY COLLECTION
TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THIS ONE IT'S REAL SPECIAL
USED TO BELONG TO DOC HORROR NOW I GOT HIM TRUSSED UP LIKE A CHRISTMAS BIRD AT THE BUNKHOUSE ON 14TH
HEH THE BOYS RE THROWING A LITTLE PARTY
HE DEAD?
NOT YET A FEW LOVE TAPS BUT HE'LL LIVE
HE'S BEEN GUMMING UP THE WORKS FOR THE NARMAC SINCE HE BUST MY DAD'S OUTFIT FOUR YEARS AGO THEY GOT A REAL HANGER SON THAT NO GOOD FOOLHEAD
AND OUR DEAL WITH THEM HINGES ON HAND NO HIM OVER
WE'RE GONNA CEMENT OUR THING WITH HIM TONIGHT ONCE AND FOR ALL
WHAT'S THIS BAD BLOOD BETWEEN YOU AND THE DOC ANYWAY TONY?
OH? WHAT DO I SAY?
WHO CARES ANYWAY? THE DOC WAS CREEPY HAD THE EVIL EYE.
I THOUGHT HORROR WAS CLOSE WITH YOUR FATHER HE TOOK OUT THE COMPETITION THAT'S CALLY SINGLE HANDED! DON CAPO TREATED HIM ABOUT LIKE A SON-
JESUS CHRIST, FREDDY!
SORTA LIKE THIS STONEWALLIN MUT
GENTLEMEN THE NARMAC CORPORATION ARE EAGER TO DO BUSINESS NOW THAT THE MATTER OF NICOLE'S HORROR HAS BEEN TAKEN CARE OF. REST ASSURED THERE WILL BE NO MORE DELAYS

THAT'S RIGHT HORROR WAS A BIG PAIN IN THE ASS NOW HE'S ANCIENT FROGIN HISTORY
THESE SYNTHETICS LIKE LUCY HERE CAN RUN OUR SMALLER INTERESTS BETTER THAN THE PUNKS WE CURRENTLY GOT WORKIN DOWN THERE
YOU'RE CLASS THEY DON'T MAKE MISTAKES AND THEY AIN'T GUNNA RIP US OFF AND WE CAN LEASE THEM FROM THE MAJOR REAL MEAN
ALL WE GOTTA DO IS SET 'EM UP IS STRAIGHT
AND WAIT FOR THE MONEY TO ROLL IN RIGHT? RIGHT?
ONLY SINCE WHEN WAS YOU EVER AFRAID OF A LITTLE HARD-EARNED? YOU GETTIN SOFT ON US?
OR MAYBE YOU GONNA TRY REPLACIN US NEXT
I'M WITH YA RIGHT TONY
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TRYIN TO DO AIN'T IT
WE DO SOME FAMILY WORKIN THOSE NEW HOODOOS YOU ASKIN US TO GET AN ARMY OF WIND UPS TAKE OVER IN RACKETS MADE US WHAT WE ARE
YOUR PAPA THE DON HE WOULDN
MY FATHER IS RETIRED!
I'M CAPE NOW! AND I'LL SHOOT THE NEXT BASTARD WHO FORGETS THAT
YOU'RE GONNA END UP WITH YOUR DADDY'S BAD STOMACH, MY NOT

I GOT MY OWN USCER PROCYON I D DN'T NVITE YOU HERE
THE SCENT OF FEAR WAS MY INV TAT ON TONY
YOU RE SCARING THESE POOR MEN W TH YOUR I, ROBOT" TALK YOU DON T WANNA SADDLE THEM U P W H THAT PONY BELIEVE ME
I VE SEEN HER RUN
I DON T KNOW HOW THEY GOT THEIR HOOKS INTO YOU, ZAMPA BUT IF YOU THINK YOU CAN LEAVE ME TWISTING WHILE YOU DEAL WITH THESE SCUM, YOU RE CRAZY EIGHTS
HE I COULD NEVER TRUST ANYBODY WHO HIDES BEHIND A SCARF LIKE SOME WEEPY FRAI
ONE OF THESE DAYS WE RE GONNA HAVE TO FIND OUT JUST HOW UGLY YOU ARE UNDER THAT COW. MR PANE
NDEED
YOU PROMISED THE RACKETS TO THE FREELYNCHERS, TONY BALONEY WE RE MAK NG YOU A FORTUNE DOWN THERE YOU, ZAMPAS MADE A DEAL W.TH PROCYON CLEANHANDS I'M HERE TO REMIND YOU
GUESS I CHANGED MY MIND BANDIT T GET T RED OF THE SMELL OF COON URD N MY BACKYARD
WHAT CAN I SAY?
YOU CAN START WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER
LET'S JUST THROW THIS UNEMPLOYED FREAK OFF THE ROOF
GET HIS RON FIRST

I CAN'T DO THAT, MR ZAMPA
WHAAAT?
HOWEVER I WILL SHOOT THE FIRST OF YOU GENTLEMEN THAT MOVES
NOW LOOK AT THAT THAT'S A SHAME
I'LL KILL THE GODDAMN TEST TUBE WEASEL!
I'M A RACCOON, TONY
YOU NEVER TREED YOURSELF A COON BEFORE? YOU GOT ONE NOW. FORGET THE FIRE I'M HOLDING HERE IN MY HAND AND BAG ME IF YOU GOT THE SALT FOR IT
I'D MAKE A REAL NICE COAT FOR YOUR MISTRESS
CLICK CLICK
CLICK CLICK"
THAT'S TOUGH
LOOKS LIKE THE HEAT'S GONE OUT IN YOUR UNIT THERE PRINCE
BLAM
BLAM

AND I THOUGHT I WAS A CRUEL BASTARD. WHICH ONE OF YOU WISEGUYS STOLE ALL THIS RABBIT'S PELLETS?
SORRY BANDIT THE CLIP JUST SLIPPED OUT
WE KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE FAIR, BANDIT BUT IT WAS TOO GREAT A TEMPTATION!
HAHA
HAHA
SORRY THERE MR FANE DON'T TAKE IT PERSONAL TONY HAD IT COMIN HE WENT BEHIND US ON THIS DEAL WITH YOU IT'S UGLY BUT IT'S OUR WAY
RAISE THEM GLASSES BOYS TO THE TRUE THINGS! THE OLD WAYS!
TO THE NEWEST MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY!
A GUTSIER CRITTER I NEVER MET!
TO TRUE YON CLEANHANDS THE RACCOON! SALUDE!
SALUDE!
SALUDE!
CLINK
CLINK
HERE'S TO YA BANDIT!

A SHORT WHILE LATER
I THOUGHT THEY'D NEVER LEAVE
SITTING THERE DRINKING GOOD BOOZE AND GETTIN' LIGHT WITH TONY'S CORPSE AYN THERE LIKE THAT HE SICK TARTS
I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOMO SAPIENS
THERE'S SOME, UH, CASH IN HIS COAT HERE HANDY IN HIS ARMPIT
AH A MONEY
SQUIDS
WELL DON'T WANT TO SEE IT ALL GO MAKING A MESS OVER HERE
WELL BOIL ME CHICKEN AND WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU GOT THERE?
A LITTLE ORGANIC MEAT
IT HAS NO ODOR
THAT'S LEAST 700 WEIRD
NOBODY KEEPS A SQUID IN THE BASEMENT AND TONY WEREN'T NO ANIMAL LOVER, THAT'S FOR SURE JUST PUT IT BACK.
AND DUMP HIM IN THE PARK

AHEM
YOU STILL AROUND, FANG? YOU'RE LUCKY I DON'T SKIN YOU ALIVE RIGHT HERE IN MY NEW OFFICE AND BLOW AWAY DIRTBAG
ONLY AND I HAD CERTAIN BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS WHEN YOU MURDERED HIM, THOSE ARRANGEMENTS BECAME OUR BUSINESS
WHAT BUSINESS? YOU'RE AFTER DOC HORROR BIG DEAL
THAT WILL DO FOR STARTERS, TONY AND I HAD OTHER MATTERS TO
SAVE IT, TURNKEY
YOU WANT HORROR AND THAT'S IT IN A NUTSHELL. ALL THAT CHUNK PARTNERSHIP GARBAGE, THAT'S SMOKE. YOU CAN BLOW UP SOMEONE ELSE'S TA.
I MAY NOT LOVE THE TWISTED BASTARD, BUT I'M NOT GONNA SELL HIM OUT TO MY OWN ENEMIES
HORROR'S LIBERATED
BITING MAJOR CHUNKS OUT OF YOUR HIDES AND NOW YOU WANT HIS HEAD ON A PONY STICK
UP UNTIL NOW WE'VE BEEN CHARITABLE BECAUSE DIRECTOR FLETCHER WAS PARTIAL TO YOU AS A PUP
THE RASCAL PERSONA IS NO LONGER ENTERTAINING. YOU'VE OUTGROWN THE CUTENESS
I'LL LOOK REAL CUTE WITH YOUR LIVER HANGING OFF THE END OF MY FORK
WE'LL SEE WHO DINES ON WHO
BY THE WAY, I DON'T THINK YOU'LL GET YOUR PAWS ON HORROR TONIGHT

HE WON'T BE UNDER WRAPS FOR LONG
HE'S GOT FAMILY THEY'LL COME LOOKIN FOR HIM
AND I FEEL SORRY FOR WHOEVER GETS IN THEIR WAY -
I'M HUNGRY
SHHH
ANTHONY ZAMPA'S HIDEAWAY ALL HIS PERSONAL JUNK JUMPS RUNS HERE
SORRY SKIDS THIS AIN'T NO BUM'S FLOP
SO SHOVE
BORROW YOUR MATCHES, QUINCY?
NEED A LIGHT?
GOT ONE RIGHT HERE

LEW WHAT THE HELL YOU DOING, MAN?
RELAX Q THEY GOT A KID WITH 'EM
THANKS BUDDY
FOOMP
HE'S A BURNER!
GET BACK, MAN!
DON'T GO GETTING WILD ON US PHESTUS
HEY QUINCY, THAT'S THE FIRELION, MAN THIS IS HORROR'S CREW!
MORON! WE WERE SUPPOSED TO KEEP OUR EYES PEELED FOR THEM!

NO, NO!! BACK OFF, Q! HE'LL TORCH US
GOT ORDERS, MAN
I AIN'T DONE YET!
I'M GONNA BLOW THIS BASTARD AWAY, LEW, RIGHT NOW!!!
CHIK CHIK
FORWARD
FWOOOSH
HOLD UP! I HEAR RAD'O SQUAWK THERE'S A PROWL CAR COMING TH'S WAY
BE STILL, EVERYONE, I'LL HANDLE THIS EVE DON'T MOVE, HONEY
OH GOODY

YOU LOOK A LITTLE GREEN THIS MORNING GOODIS YOU TAKE THOSE MEGA-VITAMINS I GAVE YOU?
I TOLD YOU I WOULDN'T
YOU'RE A CREEP JEFF
YES I AM REDDY YOUR STRESS COMPLEX IS TO THE DISPATCHER GREEN HAPPENS TO BE MY FAVORITE COLOR
HONEY
EAT ENOUGH OF THIS CRAP AND THEY'LL BUNKY YOU IN YOUR FAVORITE COLOR
REALLY TOUCHING, WILLEFORD
COULD BE WORSE I COULD START SMOKING AGAIN
YOU'D LOVE THAT WOULDN'T YOU?
I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU, DETECTIVE EXCEPT FOR THAT PUSHBROOM YOU GREW ON YOUR FACE OVER VACATION
MAKES YOU LOOK LIKE A PERP
I'M GETTING HUNGRY LET'S GET A
SWEET MARY WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?
THAT'S ONE OF ZAMPA'S BUILDINGS. PULL UP HERE

NOTHING A GANGSTER'S UNSWEPT PORCH
I DUNNO I THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING JUST BEFORE
A POWER SURGE WE GET A FEW OF THIS TIME OF YEAR
UH-HUH ONE OF THOSE MOTORLESS AUTUMN POWER SURGES
THAT WAS A LITTLE PIECE OF DOOMSDAY TINSEL YOU WANNA CALL IT IN?
AS WHAT? A 10 TO, OFFICER SEES NO KEEP
I'VEN LA N SINCE NOON GOODIS I NEED A HUMAN NOT A PSYCH EVALUATION DRIVE AWAY!
YOU'RE ONE HELL OF AN INVESTIGATOR WILLEFORD
THAT WAS NICE HONEY. POLYCHROME
DON'T MENTION IT NOT ALL OF US CLEAN HOUSE WITH A FLAMETHROWER
THAT WAS NEAT POLLY CAN I BE INVISIBLE FOR MY BIRTHDAY?

YOU SAID I COULD GO!
AND HERE YOU ARE. I NEED YOU TO STAY DOWNSTAIRS AND KEEP A LOOK OUT
DAD NEEDS HIS MEDICINE AND I BROUGHT IT FOR HIM
WE'RE BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL HERE
I'VE STAYED PLAY WITH YOUR DOLLS OR SOMETHING BUT IT'S TOO DANGEROUS ENOUGH WITHOUT YOU RUNNING AROUND CAUSING TROUBLE
RATS
I HATE WAITING
AND I DON'T WANT TO PLAY IN THIS YUCKY OL' ROOM!
DON FRET
WE'LL BE BACK BEFORE SHE TURNS ANYONE INTO A PUMPKIN

WISH ONE OF THESE CRATES HAD A TV INSIDE INSTEAD OF GUNS
IF YOU HADN'T BUSTED THE SET WE COULDA WATCHED THE FIGHTS TONIGHT
WASN'T HE SAM
RIGHT HEY KNOW WHO THEY ARE UPSTAIRS
SOME SKELL
NO THAT'S HIM THE ONE THEY'RE ALL LOOKING FOR
ZAMMA TRICKED HIM INTO COMIN HERE AND SOME COCK SUCKER IN HIM SAID HIS DADDY TOOK ILL AND HAD TO COME SEE
HE'S A DOCTOR I HEARD IT WAS SOME KIND OF FIXER
SHUT THE HELL UP! YOU HEAR THAT?
SOUNDS LIKE SINGING
TRICK OR TREAT! IT'S JUST ME
YEAH KINDA PRETTY PUMP A SLUG THROUGH THE DOOR HERE SEE IT STOPS

I'M SUPPOSED TO WAIT DOWN HERE AND PLAY WITH DOLLS BUT I'M KIND OF BORED
MY DAD ALWAYS SAYS ONLY BORING PEOPLE GET BORED SO I GUESS I SHOULD JUST PLAY OR SOMETHING
THIS IS MY FAVORITE BOY DOLL
HE TOLD ME HIS REAL NAME, BUT I KEEP SAYING IT WRONG SO I JUST CALL HIM PLAIN ELF
HATES THAT

ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GIVE HER CANDY NOW?
I'M GONNA PUNCH HER TICKE RIGHT HERE
IT'S NOT POLITE TO POINT GUNS AT A KID YOU'RE NOT NICE AT ALL
N FACT YOU RE BOTH VERY MEAN
ELF DOESN'T LIKE YOUR GUNS EITHER
WHAT THE HELL?

I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY SAID, I'M FOR BUSTING THIS CREEP INTO KINDLING
I HEAR THAT BUT WE GOTTA WAIT TIL LUCA'S FINISHED WORK NO HIM OVER
HEH TALK ABOUT YER CRUEL AND-UNUSUALS
AND HOW WOULD YOU TYPIFY YOUR FEELINGS FOR AUTHORITY FIGURES? CAN YOU SUPPLY ME WITH SOME KEY PHRASES OR ADJECTIVES
WOULD IT BE SAFE TO SAY THAT YOUR VIOLENT AND UNSAVORY IMPULSES WERE A DIRECT RESULT OF A LESS THAN WHOLESOME FAMILY LIFE?
HOW ABOUT THE CAREER ASPECT? DO YOU FIND THAT A SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM QUELLS THE MORE SAVAGE TENDENCIES OF CRIME? IS IT TRUE THAT YOU USED TO PRACTICE MEDICINE?
PLEASE DOCTOR YOUR INSIGHTS CONCERNING THE CRIMINAL MIND WOULD BE INVALUABLE TO THE COMPLETION OF MY THESIS
WOULD YOU LIKE A GLASS OF WATER?
DOCTOR?

BUHWHA
ACK
KTHUD
THE SENTRY WAS WRONG THIS IS A BLM'S FLOP
FWOOOSH
CHUK
RROAAARRRH
BLAM
KPOW
DAMMIT, PHESTUS KEEP THOSE FLAMES LOW! YOU'RE DRYING ME OUT!

BLAMM
HAVE YOU OUT OF THERE IN JUST A FEW SHAKES DOC
EXCUSE ME
EXCUSE YOURSELF
PTING
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
LLZRAITZ
GRRAAORWRRL
SSHLUKKK
OOP
SPERE
BLAMBLAM
MERMAID

DON'T GIVE ME THAT, EVE. WITH THE TOYS YOU HAVE, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO BE BORED.
WELL, I WAS.
OOH, LOOK, POLLY! STARFISH AND PIRELION MADE EVEN BIGGER MESSES THAN ME.
SHHRRK
PPCHHRRSSHH
KRCK
POP
LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU...UM, PEOPLE ARE, BUT I HAVE AN INTERVIEW TO CONDUCT WITH THIS MAN. WE HAVE A LOT OF CRUCIAL GROUND TO COVER... AND ALL OF THIS NOISE AND BULLETS... IT'S TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE!
I'M SORRY, BUT WE'LL ALL HAVE TO WAIT OUTSIDE.
HI, DAD.

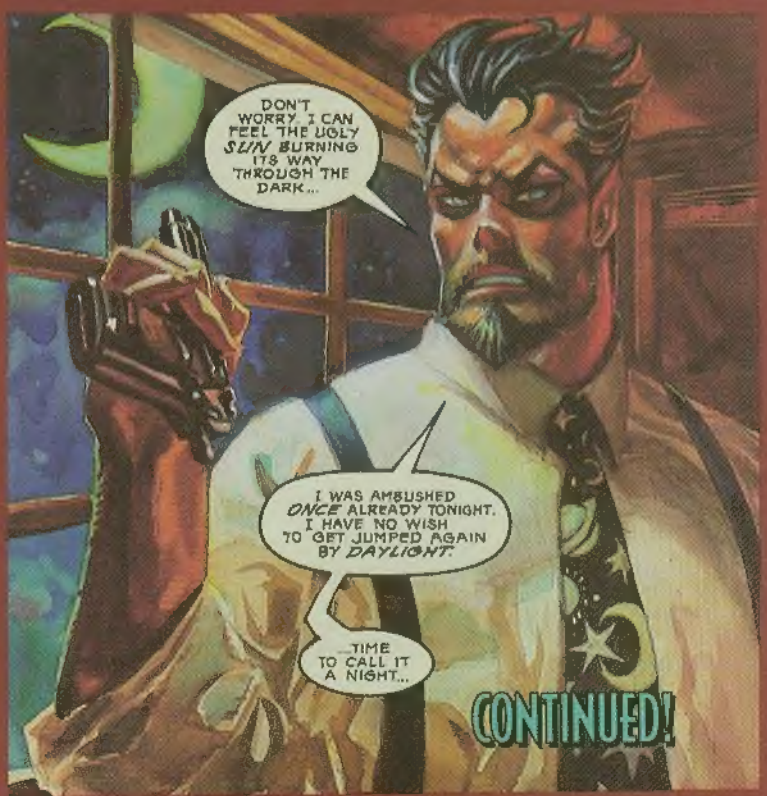
CHILDREN ARE DEFINITELY NOT PERMITTED ON THESE PREMISES. MISTER ZAMPA GAVE STRICT INSTRUCTIONS THAT NO ONE WAS TO DISTURB US.
I'M CALLING FOR MORE SECURITY.
YOU PEOPLE HAVE SOME NERVE...
I'M GOING TO SLAP HER.
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, STARFISH.
DOC! YOU OKAY?

I'VE BEEN JUMPED BY UNWASHED HOMUNCULI, TIED IN A CANVAS SACK AND VERBALLY WORKED-OVER BY THIS OBSEQUIOUS YOUNG WOMAN...
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I FEEL PRETTY GOOD.
THANKS FOR THE HAND, EVE. DID YOU BRING MY MEDICINE, BY CHANCE?
YEP.
DAD, D'YOU STILL WANT THAT PAPER HAT?
WHAT HAPPENED, DOC? WE WAITED... BUT YOU NEVER SHOWED.
LOOKS LIKE YOUR INTERVIEW IS OVER, RED.
TONY ZAMPA SET ME UP.
HAD ME THINKING HIS FATHER NEEDED MY HELP. I THINK HE WAS TRYING TO INGRATIATE HIMSELF WITH THE NAZIS. IF HE HAD WANTED ME DEAD, MY REMAINS WOULD BE SWIMMING AWAY IN THE BELLIES OF THE LOCAL MARINE LIFE BY NOW.
MY GUESS IS THEY'RE NEGOTIATING SOME SORT OF UNDERWORLD DEFENSE CONTRACT...
THAT'S BETTER.
THOSE TORPEDOES WORE ME OUT.
ONE OF THE LITTLE THIEVES LEFT WITH MY AUTOMATIC.
PROBABLY GAVE IT TO TONY FOR HIS IDIOT GUN COLLECTION.

FINE?
BELIEVE ME, DOC, WE HAD NO CHOICE.
ANY PARTICULAR REASON YOU BROUGHT EVE WITH YOU? THIS IS HER STUDY HOUR.
YOU SENT HER SMELLY BABYSITTER TO HELP BUST OUT THAT REPTILE FROM THE MONSTER SHOP, REMEMBER?

THAT'S RIGHT. THE GUNWITCH SLIPPED OUT RIGHT AFTER YOU LEFT AND POLLY WOULDN'T STAY AT THE ISLAND.
SHE WAS AFRAID STARFISH AND I WOULD MAKE TOO MUCH NOISE.
SHE WAS RIGHT. BLESS YOUR PACIFIST HEART, POLYCHROME. YOU'RE AN ANGEL OF STEALTH.
STARFISH, I'M A LITTLE LIGHT. MIND LOANING ME YOUR BACKUP PIECE?

SURE, DOC
JUST PROMISE ME WE'LL BE HOME SOON. I NEED TO SOAK.


DON'T WORRY. I CAN FEEL THE UGLY SUN BURNING ITS WAY THROUGH THE DARK...
I WAS AMBUSHED ONCE ALREADY TONIGHT. I HAVE NO WISH TO GET JUMPED AGAIN BY DAYLIGHT.
TIME TO CALL IT A NIGHT...
CONTINUED!